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In the past two years, the ECB has put a series of safeguards in place to ensure that children are not at risk in their enjoyment of cricket. The Board, in partnership with the PCA, is also leading the way in the fight against doping in sport.

## Child Protection

Since the Safe Hands Child Protection Policy was introduced in cricket in 2003 there has been a significant increase in understanding and awareness about safeguarding children in the sport. The ECB would like to thank the County Boards for their considerable input into this important area of the game.

Over 31,000 Criminal Record Bureau checks have been completed on individuals who hold posts in cricket and who have regular and direct contact with children and young persons.

In September 2004, the ECB met the first two standards of the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit's Safeguarding Standards for National Governing Bodies of Sport. These standards were introduced in 2003 and all sports are required to meet the standards in incremental stages by 2009. By the end of 2006 the ECB will have met a further three of these standards.

National initiatives and partnerships have been actively sought with the intention of empowering both children and clubs to actively safeguard children and young people. An initiative with the NSPCC, working in partnership with the NSPCC Helpline, will be launched ahead of the 2006 season to provide children and young people with a further means of raising their concerns. The Helpline will be branded the *Safe Hands Helpline* and will be promoted throughout the club network and at international matches.

The ECB has also developed a partnership with the National Crime Squad in relation to

online and internet safeguarding. The Virtual Global Taskforce, which is an international collaboration with several police jurisdictions around the world, will provide a reporting mechanism for children and clubs on cricket websites, message forums and chat rooms. Guidance notes on running chat rooms and forums will be provided to all ECB affiliated clubs and County Boards.



## Anti-Doping

The last two years have seen a greater worldwide collaboration in sport in the fight against doping with the introduction of the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) and the subsequent development of the WADA Code which is seen as the benchmark for sport anti-doping regulations across the world. The ECB is currently working with UK Sport, who provide the testing programme officers in the UK, and the ICC to meet the increased requirements that compliance with the WADA Code would necessitate. The ICC and the ECB aim to be fully WADA compliant by the end of 2006.

To ensure it is fulfilling all its responsibilities in this area, ECB is undertaking a number of initiatives including a very significant partnership with the Professional Cricketers

Association (PCA) to deliver a ground breaking education programme involving one to one sessions with all players in the national squads and academies as well as all first-class counties.

During these sessions players will meet with a PCA member of staff who has been trained as a UK Sport Anti-Doping tutor. The tutor will work with the player discussing key topics in anti-doping and reinforcing particular elements of ECB's Anti-Doping programme.

Each session will be tailored to the player's previous knowledge and experience of anti-doping. Further education programmes are planned for the cricket support staff so that they can fully assist the players with accurate advice and recommendations. This type of programme is a first for sport in the UK and it is encouraging to see cricket leading the field in this area.

## Cricket For All

The England and Wales Cricket Board is fully committed to supporting the principle and practice of equity.

No participant, volunteer, job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, parental or marital status, colour, race, ethnic origin, creed, disability, social status or sexual preference or will be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be relevant to performance.

The ECB and its partners in the sport of cricket are united in encouraging all involved in the game to adopt this vision for equity ●